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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREST SERVICE

COPY

Region - Five

REPLY TO: 5230 Evaluation

November 21, 1977

SUBJECT: Insect Evaluation - DR 137/77

TO: Forest Supervisor, Plumas N.F.

16000 Acres



Both Cleburne Smith and Paul Scheidig reported by phone the extensive tree mortality continuing in the South Fork drainage of the Feather River. The area was inspected by Entomologist John Pierce, accompanied by Smith and Norm Wycoff on October 27. We hope to obtain additional information about the problem with aerial photographs in the near future.

Just the visual impact of the inspection made October 27 indicates that tree mortality has increased over the considerable loss that occurred in the area last spring. Checking individual trees disclosed that most of them are still green (not infested) in the lower crown and lower bole.

The prevalence of top-killed, green butted trees suggest that the western pine beetle population had not increased enough to fully occupy most of the susceptible trees. Apparently drought is driving the tree mortality problem and the beetles are lagging behind, taking advantage of the abundant food supply. Possibly the salvage done last spring had some effect on preventing the beetle population from expanding to the full potential of the situation. However, the current crop of top killed trees constitutes a highly desirable food source to support an explosive increase in beetle populations next spring.

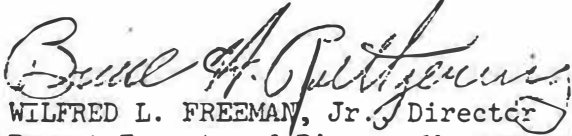
We understand planning to salvage this loss is already in progress. And that treatment of impacted stands will include silvicultural considerations to prevent or mitigate future loss - risk tree removal, thinning, hardwood competition, etc. We fully support and encourage these actions. If the program can be carried out before early next summer, we anticipate several benefits: (1) Maximum recovery of timber values and grade, (2) Limitation of beetle numbers by removal of infested trees, (3) Limitation of beetle food supply (4) Increased growing space and moisture for residual trees. However, excessive tree mortality probably can not be completely stopped in one operation due to the damage already caused by the drought.

While supporting the proposed action of salvage and silvicultural treatment, we can envision two problems to avoid:

(1) Cutting green trees produces green slash which is counter-productive for beetle suppression. Chemical thinning, rather than

chain-saw thinning, might reduce this hazard.

(2) The program may become too massive to carry out. Subdividing the entire area into units for individual treatment might be a hedge against inadequate treatment of the entire problem.

  
WILFRED L. FREEMAN, Jr. Director

/s/ Forest Insect and Disease Management

Enclosure

# FOREST PEST DETECTION REPORT

## I. FIELD INFORMATION

1. County: <i>Butte</i>	2. Forest (FS only): <i>Plumas</i>	3. District (FS only): <i>La Porte</i>
4. T. <i>19+20N</i> R. <i>6+7E</i> S. _____	6. Location: <i>S FK Feather River</i>	7. Land Ownership: 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forest Service 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Other Federal 3 <input type="checkbox"/> State 4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private
5. Date: <i>Oct. 12, 1977</i>		
8. Cause of Damage: 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Insect    4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weather 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Disease   5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Animal   6 <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	9. Size of Tree Damaged: 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Seedling   4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sawtimber 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Sapling 3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pole        5 <input type="checkbox"/> Over-mature	10. Part of Tree Damaged: 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Root        5 <input type="checkbox"/> Twig 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Branch      6 <input type="checkbox"/> Bark 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Leader      7 <input type="checkbox"/> Cone 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Trunk       8 <input type="checkbox"/> Foliage
11. Species Damaged: <i>Mainly PP</i>	12. Number Damaged: <i>Many</i>	13. Acres of Damage: <i>Many</i>
14. Damage Distribution: 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Scattered    2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grouped		15. Status of Damage: 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increasing   2 <input type="checkbox"/> Decreasing   3 <input type="checkbox"/> Static
16. Stand Type Class:	17. Plantation? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	18. Estimated Stems/Acre:
19. Pest Name (if known), and Remarks (symptoms and contributing factors): <i>Western pine beetle</i> <i>Ips</i>		

20. Sample Forwarded? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	21. Action Requested: 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Your Information 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Lab Identification 3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Field Evaluation	22. Reporter's Name: <i>Gleburne Smith</i> <i>Paul Scheidig</i> by <i>V.</i>	23. Reporter's Agency: <i>USFS</i>
		24. Reporter's Address: <i>Challenge</i>	

## II. REPLY

25. <i>Report attached</i>	<div style="float: right; transform: rotate(90deg); transform-origin: right top; white-space: nowrap;"> <i>DF 137/77</i> </div>
26. Report Number: <i>DR/353/77</i>	27. Date: <i>11/14/77</i> Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>

